

THE SETTING

it is used for the growing of vegetables, specially fruit-bearing 351
 creepers, and throughout the year it is used by the household fowls.
 Similarly, in most of these houses the cattle-shed is very close to 343
 the main living-room. Hardly half a dozen houses in the village [514]
 have latrines; the majority of the people go out into the fields or
 behind the rocks for answering the call of nature. Notwithstanding [353]
 some variety, the decorative designs found on all the houses follow
 a generally established pattern. The floors are swept twice every
 day in almost all the houses. The mud floor is periodically smeared [356]
 with cow-dung mixed with water and the walls are washed
 annually with lime or coloured earth. Grain and provisions are [251]
 stored in large receptacles made either by the potter and well
 burnt to a vermilion red or by the Erkala in their traditional
 styles of basket-work.

All the houses in Shamirpet can be classed into one of these three 342
 types. The Gudse-type huts of the Erkalas are, however, a class
 by themselves. These small, circular huts, made from sheets of 351
 weed-matting, are about twenty feet in diameter and are often
 only six feet high. The interior is unpartitioned and serves as
 bedroom, dining-room, living-room and kitchen. Pigs and poultry
 are housed in similar but smaller round huts built in the immediate
 vicinity of the dwelling-hut.

From time to time groups of families belonging to the nomadic [221]
 castes come to the village. These have their low, portable huts,
 which are mostly made of folding bamboo screens. Almost every
 month some group belonging to this category makes its appearance
 in Shamirpet and after a stay of a week or so moves off with its
 huts, dogs and pigs.

5. THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF SHAMIRPET

The nearness of Shamirpet to the cities of Hyderabad and 621
 Secundrabad has been mentioned. People holding small govern- [574]
 ment posts or having urban relations make periodic visits to the
 city. Others, especially young men, cycle down to Secundrabad or
 Hyderabad to visit the cinema or to look at the shops.

In the broad social sense, however, Shamirpet's more intimate
 ties are with the villages in the neighbourhood. In the events and
 developments of these villages the people of Shamirpet are very
 keenly interested. The hamlets of Babugura and Upparpalli are

426 poorer classes, when they find that their debts have overgrown their income, generally hand over their lands to the lenders of money.

167 Emigrants leave the village for two reasons :—(1) indebtedness and (2) want of sufficient work and means of living. As previously stated two families of weavers have gone to Rajahmundry for factory work, and one family of Komatis to the Godavari Agency. Some of the Panchamas and toddy drawers go to Rangoon, Moulmein, Singapore, and formerly went to Natal and the Transvaal. They return at the end of $1\frac{1}{2}$ or 2 years. Some have made a little profit by going out, but not much. One effect of such emigration is to prevent people from lending money freely to all. The poorer classes do not get loans so easily now for want of security.

164 *Sanitary condition.*—There is no malaria. Six years ago there was a heavy attack of cholera, the number of deaths being between 150 and 200. It was impossible to keep any accurate account. Two years ago there was a serious attack of smallpox, when about 160 adults and children together died. It is significant that among Brahmans not a single person was attacked by either of these diseases. Among the Vaisyas the number of deaths was 5 and 3, respectively, among the Sudras it was 50 from cholera, 60 from small-pox. All the rest of the cases were in the lower castes. The death-rate of the children was far greater than that of adults.

165 The village statistics show 480 children born in the five years
759 from 1911 to 1915, 321 under 14 years of age dying during these years. The record of births is probably very defective, but the rate of mortality among infants and young children is certainly terribly high. There is no effective medical assistance available. The quack doctors of the village are merely deceitful and ignorant and practice the trade with no schooling or knowledge. Men following various occupations, who do not earn much at their proper calling, are the doctors of the village, who administer red or black powders to the patient one after another, call the fever this and that, starve the patient for 15 or 20 days, keep him in comfortable delusions all the while, and having made up 20 or 30 rupees send him to an untimely grave. The villagers prefer to entrust their lives to these doctors than to risk them in the hands of an English trained doctor. The hospital assistant near by has not won a good name for English medicine.

The wife of the barber is the nurse for all cases of pregnancy, and the general authority on all cases of feminine complaints.

758 For want of education, people do not observe the elementary principles of sanitation. For instance in times of epidemic diseases they do not isolate patients. They spread the disease by cleaning all kinds of cloth in village tanks. They do not reveal the disease immediately after the attack. They keep the patients in crowded houses and move and eat and sleep very close to them. Even for ordinary fevers, the patient is starved for 5 or 6 days, so that he will be weak and useless for work for a number of days afterwards.

511 The poorer classes are often subjected to disease for want of
356 healthy and sufficient food, and clean surroundings. Every poor man has two or three cattle at least; and their huts being crowded, with limited space, it happens generally that the cattle are kept

very close to the human inmates. Rubbish and cow-dung are stored up in front of the houses, while in rainy seasons the whole becomes a stagnant pool of water, rubbish and cow-dung. 511 356

The houses of the Pariahs are filled with an awful smell of skins, bones and putrid flesh. The insufficiency of food that they suffer from tempts them to fill their bellies with toddy and other stimulants that ultimately ruin their health.

The Sudras are perfectly temperate and simple in habits and food. The "twice-born" castes are bound to marry their girls before twelve. The lower castes are not bound to do so. But the Sudras and lower castes actually marry their girls at a very early age, both to satisfy the anxiety of elders and for fear they may not have the money afterwards. I know a case in which a girl two months old was married to a boy of two years, the boy dying a year later of cholera. They maintain strict widowhood like the Brahmans. There is no purdah. 582

The villagers bathe and wash clothes and also wash their cattle in the same tank as that used for drinking. 515

Education.—There is one school; its accommodation and equipment being a rented house, an atlas, a globe, text books, some pictures of common objects, civics primers, dumb-bells, a black board, a desk, benches for boys to sit upon. 871

Elementary education is given up to the fourth standard, in the vernacular, in history, arithmetic, geography, civics, etc. This education is most unpractical and incomplete and ill-suited to the villagers, who do not proceed to college classes. It does not enable them to read good books in Telugu or to learn even the elementary principles of sanitation. They are never made to feel that they are citizens of a world, or an empire, or a province, outside the narrow bounds of their village.

<i>Attendance—</i>	<i>Boys.</i>	<i>Girls.</i>
1913	19	4
1914	9	3
1915	45	12
1916	54	8
1917	48	6

About 30 per cent of the adults can read the vernacular; two persons can read and talk English. There is a noted musician in the village but no other pandit. Not less than 25 or 30 per cent of those who have passed through the school have lost their capacity to write or cipher after leaving. One boy has proceeded to the Mechanical Engineering course in the Victoria Technical Institute, Bombay; another to the Arts course in the Madras University. [91]

There are 90 to 100 books, of which 70 are owned by Brahmans, made up of novels, dramas, puranas, the Mahabharata and stories. 538
Among the Sudras, a development of literary taste, though in a very small degree, is perceptible. There are many devotional songs and lives of Telugu saints, while stories of the epics rendered into songs and recited by "Bhagavathars" are very frequent. The latest innovation is the introduction of dramas. Novels are still a rarity, as well as histories. No newspaper comes to the village.

The village has no temple except that of the village goddess. Her festival is celebrated with much slaughter of cattle and goats given by their owners whenever there is an outbreak of cholera or small-pox; or, failing these, once in four or five years. The cost is 796